

# **PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS**

## **WHO WE ARE**

Founded as the President's Council on Youth Fitness in 1956, the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS) is a Federal Advisory Committee of up to twenty Presidential appointees. The members are current and former athletes, business leaders, educators, medical professionals and concerned citizens, who volunteer their time to promote the Council's mission to help Americans adopt active lifestyles for good health and overall well being.

## **WHAT WE DO**

The Council advises the President and the Secretary of Health and Human Services about physical activity, fitness, and sports in America. The Council also recommends programs to promote regular physical activity for the health of the nation; works with private sector partners to implement programs at the grassroots level; and distributes health and fitness information.

**PCPFS HEALTH  
INFORMATION WEBSITE**  
**[www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)**

## **NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH**

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, established by the Council in 1983, is a campaign to promote nationwide physical activity/fitness and sports participation. Materials are available on [www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov) to assist organizations and communities wishing to increase physical activity/fitness and health among their constituencies. Organizations are encouraged to become "Presidential Partners in May" in order to promote health and fitness events together throughout "May Month."

## **PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND FITNESS**

### **AWARDS PROGRAM ("PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE") - [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org)**

The President's Challenge is a motivational awards program to encourage all Americans to be physically active on a regular basis and to improve or maintain health. The Challenge is composed of different award tracks to serve every member of the population: the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA), Presidential Champions, and the physical fitness and health fitness testing program for youth aged six to seventeen. The President's Challenge is administered under a collaborative agreement with the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU).

## **MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS:**

John P. Burke, Chairman  
Dorothy G. "Dot" Richardson, M.D., Vice Chair  
Denise Austin  
Catherine M. Baase, M.D.  
J. Nick Baird, M.D.  
Kirk Bauer  
Steve Bornstein  
Paul R. Carrozza  
Susan Dell  
Lillian Greene-Chamberlain, Ph.D.  
Bill Greer

Donna Richardson Joyner  
Edward R. Laskowski, M.D.  
Elisha "Eli" Manning  
T.L. "Tedd" Mitchell, M.D.  
Charles H. Moore  
Jerry Noyce  
Mary Lou Retton  
Andy Roddick  
W. Edgar Welden, Sr.

Melissa Johnson, Executive Director

## ***Earn Presidential Awards***

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports has a free motivational awards program, the President's Challenge, designed to help all Americans age six and above, including people with disabilities, make and keep a commitment to regular physical activity. Log on to [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org) to find out how you can earn awards or call 1-800-258-8146.



### **• The Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA)**

The PALA motivates adults and children age 6-17 to begin a physical activity program by being active for 5 days a week for 6 weeks (30 minutes a day for adults or 60 minutes a day for kids). Choose from over 100 activities and track the activities online or on paper. After six weeks of continuous activity, participants are eligible for a PALA patch/certificate or a PALA lapel pin.

The online program is available at [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org). A paper log for the PALA can be obtained by calling 1-800-258-8146. After earning a PALA, participants are encouraged to continue their active lifestyles by earning another PALA or by striving to earn a Presidential Champions award.

### **• The Presidential Champions Award**

The Presidential Champions Award is for adults who are already active more than 30 minutes a day/5 days a week (more than 60 minutes a day for kids). This award is available online only. Log on to [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org), register, choose activities; and earn points for each activity logged based on the intensity of the activities and the amount of time spent being active. Participants strive to accumulate points to earn a bronze, silver, or gold medal or lapel pin.

The PALA and Presidential Champions programs are free, but there is a nominal charge to purchase the optional array of awards.

**You're it.  
Get fit!**





# ***The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports***

## **MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS**

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| <p><b>1953</b> – Kraus/Weber report is published, which designates US children as less fit than their European counterparts.</p> <p><b>1956</b> – President Dwight D. Eisenhower creates the President's Council on Youth Fitness to improve the fitness of American young people.</p> <p><b>1961</b> – President John F. Kennedy changes the name to the President's Council on Physical Fitness in order to address all age groups.</p> <p><b>1966</b> – President Lyndon B. Johnson creates the Presidential Physical Fitness Award, the forerunner of the current President's Challenge Physical Activity and Fitness Awards program (<a href="http://www.presidentschallenge.org">www.presidentschallenge.org</a>).</p> <p><b>1968</b> – President Johnson changes the name of the Council to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, to encourage fitness through participation in sports and games.</p> <p><b>1976</b> – The Council is charged with assisting businesses in establishing sound physical fitness programs for employees.</p> <p><b>1983</b> – President Ronald Reagan proclaims May as National Physical Fitness and Sports Month.</p> <p><b>1985</b> – The National School Population Fitness Survey spurs the development of the National Physical Fitness Award of the President's Challenge program.</p> <p><b>1991</b> – The Participant Physical Fitness Award is added to the President's Challenge program.</p> | <p><b>1996</b> – The landmark <i>Physical Activity and Health: A Report by the Surgeon General</i> is released.</p> <p><b>2001</b> – The Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA) is offered as an alternative to the physical fitness awards for children and youth.</p> <p><b>2002</b> – President George W. Bush launches <i>HealthierUS</i> at a Fitness Expo on the South Lawn of the White House and introduces the members of his President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.</p> <p><b>2003</b> – For the first time, the President's Challenge program is extended to include adults when the PALA is made available to all Americans aged 6 and older. President Bush introduces the Council's new online physical activity program at <a href="http://www.presidentschallenge.org">www.presidentschallenge.org</a>, at a YMCA in Dallas, Texas. The interactive Web site includes the new Presidential Champions award program, which offers bronze, silver and gold medals for points earned and tracked online.</p> <p><b>2004</b> – The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports hosts the first <i>HealthierUS Fitness Festival</i> on the National Mall to showcase the many ways to be physically active every day to enjoy a healthy lifestyle while having fun.</p> <p><b>2005</b> – At the second <i>Healthier US Fitness Festival</i> on the National Mall, more than 80 organizations participate.</p> <p><b>2006</b> – The year 2006 marks the Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.</p> |
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## ***Physical Activity Facts***

- Physical activity reduces the risk of developing or dying from cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers including colon cancer.
- Physical activity helps maintain a healthy weight; contributes to healthy bones, muscles, and joints; lessens the pain associated with arthritis; reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; and reduces the need for medications, physician visits, and hospitalizations.
- Physical activity can increase the self-esteem and learning capacity of children.
- Adults age 18 and older need at least 30 minutes of physical activity on 5 or more days a week; children and teens 17 and under need 60 minutes of physical activity a day.
- One quarter of U.S. children spend 4+ hours a day watching television.
- Physical activity need not be strenuous to be beneficial.
- Almost half of people aged 65 and older do not engage in any leisure time physical activity.
- Older adults who are physically active and participate in muscle-strengthening movements have a decreased risk of falling.
- Small steps such as parking further away from entrances, walking or biking to complete errands or to go to work or school, taking the stairs, and getting off the bus or metro a stop or two early can make a difference.
- Serving as a role model for an active lifestyle for children, family, friends, and co-workers is important.
- Approximately 25% of all trips made in the United States are less than 1 mile in length: 75% of those trips are made in the car.
- Half of all persons with disabilities aged 18 and older do not engage in any leisure time physical activity, yet every person regardless of disability can be physically active.
- Parks, hiking and biking trails, and other recreational areas are closer than you think and make great places to be active and have fun.
- Exercise can improve insulin sensitivity among all diabetics, therefore, decreasing the need for medications. It can also help people with Type 2 or adult-onset diabetes have better glucose control.
- People who serve as volunteers are almost three times as likely to achieve the recommended amount of physical activity on a daily basis.
- Communities play a large role in the activity levels of residents. Approaches to transportation services, school sites and policies, recreation facilities, land use planning, and crime prevention can have a major impact on the health and lives of area residents.
- The President's Challenge program ([www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org)) is a free online physical activity program for anyone age 6 and above who wants to become and remain physically active for life.